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*Our Vision: The NGEC provides national leadership in standardization, acquisition, and management of passenger rail equipment.*

## Section 305 Next Generation Corridor Equipment Pool Committee (NGEC)

**Monthly Activities Report: September 30, 2024**

**Submitted By: Steven J Hewitt, Program Manager, S305 NGEC**

### Public law 110-432 required Amtrak to:

*...establish a Next Generation Corridor Equipment Pool Committee, comprised of representatives of Amtrak, the Federal Railroad Administration, host freight railroad companies, passenger railroad equipment manufacturers, interested States, and as appropriate, other passenger railroad operators.*

*"The purpose of the Committee shall be to design, develop specifications for, and procure standardized next-generation corridor equipment.*

*(b) Functions – the Committee may –*

- 1) Determine the number of different types of equipment required, considering variations in operational needs and corridor infrastructure.*
- 2) Establish a pool of equipment to be used on corridor routes funded by participating states; and*
- 3) Subject agreements between Amtrak and States, utilize services provided by Amtrak to design, maintain and remanufacture equipment."*

### **Executive Board**

**Chair: Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT**

**Vice Chair: Dan Ruppert, Amtrak**

**Secretary: Amanda Martin, Iowa DOT**

**Treasurer: Tim Ziethen, Amtrak**

**The Executive Board will hold web- conference calls every 4 weeks on – Tuesdays at 11:30am Eastern.**

During the month of September 2024, the Executive Board met twice – on 9-3-24 and 9-17-24.

(The 9-17-24 meeting was a special - one issue

Highlights, decisions, updates from the NGEC during the month of September 2024:

- Treasurer's Report and status update on NGEC Funding:

Balance/Spend Rate Through June 2024

Total Invoiced/Incurred (Including Carryover) - \$154,892.18

Forecast/Accrual Amount to Reflect Billing Lag 60 days - \$30,000.

Invoiced + Accrual Expenses to date (through March) – \$184,892.18

Amtrak AOP Funding - \$260,000

Remaining funds (total available less Invoiced + Accrual) - \$75,107.82

Estimated full year (YTD Incl. Carry Over + FC + Remaining Months @ Avg Spend TD) – 201,265.68.  
Current Average Monthly Spend – just under \$16,373.50.

With this type of funding, a balance does not carry-over from one fiscal year to another.

Status - CRISI Grant Application:

The CRISI Grant Application for funding the NGEC was submitted on time to the portal. It included many letters of support. It is not too late to send in support letters. They should be sent to Tim Ziethen and Meghan Histan, Amtrak Grants.

Next Steps if not funded – or if funded:

Minutes excerpted from 9-17-24 special Board meeting:

Funding Discussion - Tim/George/Ray:

The purpose of this special Executive Board meeting was to address the issues related to funding the NGEC beyond the end of its current performance period (9-30-24) when the Amtrak stop-gap 12-month funding period expires.

#### **Background:**

Amtrak, on behalf of the NGEC has, for a second year in a row, applied for a CRISI Grant to fund the NGEC long-term. In 2023, the NGEC had applied, through Amtrak, for a CRISI Grant but was unsuccessful. Amtrak, at the time, agreed to fund the NGEC for 12 months (FY24) as a part of its Annual Operating Program (AOP) in the amount of \$260,000. The NGEC has been judicious in spending the stop-gap money and operated under a "bare-bones" budget and work plan – prioritizing the maintenance of its current specifications.

With the CRISI awards under the current round of funding not due to be awarded until October or November and requiring about 6 months to be implemented, the NGEC is once again facing a point where it's funding will cease on 9-30-24 unless another option can be found.

During the last Executive Board meeting, held on 9-3-24, it was agreed that the Board would hold a special meeting with only a focus on funding on the agenda. George Hull, Amtrak CMO, attended the 9-3-24 meeting and had expressed the view that the NGEC work is important and that Amtrak and FRA have been in discussions on how to fund it through Amtrak. George expressed on 9-3-24, the need for FRA to mandate or at least provide a request in writing asking Amtrak to fund the NGEC – potentially out of some source other than its AOP. AOP funding is "use it or lose it" and ends at the conclusion of the fiscal year. It clearly is not a practical way to continue funding the NGEC.

George Hull understood that there were discussions between Amtrak and FRA legal and grants and it could take some time to determine what would need to happen and where the funding (internal Amtrak) would come from. George also noted that if Amtrak were to take on the NGEC, its By-Laws would need to be revised as the scope of work and mission is written is too broad and contains activities that have never come to fruition including the NGEC procuring equipment. With the understanding that these issues will take time to resolve, George stated on 9-3-24 that he would fund the NGEC on a month-to-month basis for the short term while details for long-term stable funding for the NGEC and recommended By-Law changes were considered.

Since AASHTO manages sub-contractor agreements as well as the web-site and annual meeting support, and no one from AASHTO was on the 9-3-24, it was agreed that Steve Hewitt and Tim Ziethen would hold a separate call with AASHTO to brief them on where things stood and discuss the concept of month-to-month contract/sub-contractor agreements.

The call with AASHTO was held on 9-5-24, and AASHTO (Strat Cavros) stated that AASHTO would have great difficulty doing month-to-month agreements but would be able to do 90-day agreements, provided that Amtrak send it a note authorizing the extension of its agreement with Amtrak for up to 90 days and subsequently AASHTO would do the same with the NGEC contractor/sub-contractors.

#### **Discussion:**

Tim Ziethen opened the discussion by stating that internal conversations had been held about potential changes that would enable Amtrak to pick up “some of the costs” for the NGEC, and that they continue to look at options.

George Hull interjected by stating that the “NGEC is out of money and we are looking at how to continue funding the effort”. George went on to say that “FRA has asked Amtrak to fund it (NGEC) and we are looking at how to do that.” Should it be an OPEX (Operating Expense) hit to his budget or “some other mechanism”. One such mechanism being looked at is PRIIA Section 209.

George also noted that the current NGEC By-Laws would need to be revised to be clearer in scope so he knows “what I’m on the hook for”. Some of the primary functions of the NGEC (procuring/owning equipment) are not being done so the By-Laws would need to be cleaned up for a new era of the NGEC.

Tim Ziethen added that he has some “broad brushes” of ideas as to where to reduce costs. One area or conversation “we” had (internally) is that there is there is a mechanism “I believe that some or all of the costs from 305 (PRIIA Section 305 established the NGEC) could be picked up under the Section 209-billing process.” There would need to be a “fixed fee or something or a proportion...maybe something there that could handle some or all of it.”

Tim went on to note that he still needs to get a legal opinion internally at Amtrak to see if this is doable. He does, however, see this as “a more promising option for a more permanent – or in perpetuity – solution”. This is all being discussed with legal and the 209 states would need to agree. The NGEC Board would also need to weigh in on this and approve the move.

As for the By-Law changes, Tim said he would work up a rough draft initially and then work with Steve Hewitt to make the modifications that would make sense. The one area that needs to be addressed is that the mission calls for financing and procuring equipment – and this “would be easy to take out” as it is not something that the NGEC has been able to do or intends to do going forward.

If 209 cost sharing is not an option, “we may need to manage our costs” The annual meeting which is hybrid – in-person and virtual – may need to change to have members attending in-person to pay for their own travel and Amtrak could potentially take on the document control aspects of the specifications and drawings. The intent would be to keep the mission going and keep the specifications viable while focusing on the “core mission”. This would include keeping the specs up to date and tighten-up the mission statement within the By-Laws.

Ray Hessinger, NGEC Chair, commented that if there is consideration of 305 funding going through the 209 process, there is a face-to-face meeting of SAIPRC (States-Amtrak Intercity Passenger Rail Committee) next week in Norfolk, Va. Ray asked that he be provided with a 10,000-foot summary of what is being discussed so he can get it in front of the SAIPRC Board and members.

Ray added that going forward “we would need a methodology to allocate costs among the states”. Ray thinks this concept is “possible” but needs some thought. There would need to be a 209-policy amendment so that SAIPRC would be added as a reimbursable cost”.

Ray also noted that the NGEC By-Laws did not change with regard to the procurement and financing aspect because it is in the statute” that established the Section 305 NGEC. “With no federal funding being provided we would not be wed to the 305 language”. He added “it’s up to the lawyers to confirm”. Ray added that he doubts “we will ever own the equipment – since we are not a legal entity so we can’t own anything. There are obstacles for some states (NY included) if the NGEC were to be incorporated. “Ownership/procurement is not in our future”.

Jon Dees for NCDOT agreed with Ray Hessinger about eligibility today. It would take manipulation of costs and benefits to figure it out. He added that the “NGEC is important for planning for growth...there is a gap in the fleet between what we plan to use and or could use”. Jon went on to say there is a role but there would need to be a “tight case” presented as to who would pay, why we would pay, and how to divide up the costs. He also noted that “we are looking at 6 months or more to get it up and running and are likely looking at FY2026.

Tim Ziethen that “our spend rate – all in- is less than \$200,000 annually”. If spread over all agencies it would be something like a \$10,000 membership fee or allocation. Tim added that there still needs to be a legal OK and an OK from FRA as well as this Executive Board and SAIPRC would also need to agree to make modifications.

Mike Murray, FRA, added “Amtrak would take a share as well.”

Tim responded – “Yes, we haven’t totally figured it out with any details...without making any substantial changes to what we (NGEC) do today.” All members of the NGEC could get this done at about \$1000 a month.

Shayne Gill, AASHTO, asked about how other organizations or entities that used the NGEC specs – how would they be brought in without charging people using the specs.

Ray Hessinger responded that the specs are considered public documents and are to be available to the public. Changing that could cause a higher likelihood of proprietary impacts. George Hull noted that if the NGEC is funded out of his Operating costs which are federal funds - the documents would still be public. Making the specs available to the public was supposed to be a part of the benefit – and core principles.

Brian Beeler II raised the issue of the requirements for states to use the 305 specs.

Ray Hessinger provided a background on the PRIIA legislation in 2008 which created the state supported routes and established the 305 Committee for the development of standardized specifications. Following that, ARRA was signed into law and provided \$9 billion. The appropriators provided language that entities using ARRA funds must use NGEC specifications.

Since then, with AARA funds expended there is no longer a requirement for states to use the NGEC specs when procuring equipment. Ray emphasized that he believes there should not be such a requirement. It is better to make the specs available than to mandate them.

Ray noted that, to his knowledge, NGEC specifications have been used as a base spec for every intercity passenger rail procurement in the US including Venture Cars and the Charger locomotives. If there was a mandate, to use the specification, every time a change was proposed to the specification during the procurement process it would have to come back to the NGEC and that would put a tremendous work load on the NGEC and would be far too burdensome.

Brian Beeler added that he is fully supportive of the specifications and having them not be mandated- but maintained and updated by the NGEC as is the case now. Brian added that he believes it “will be hard to get states to pay”.

Ray Hessinger, getting back to the amount needed to fund the NGEC, reminded members that the current budget for FY 2024 was “as bare bones as we can make it” and there is more work that the NGEC should be taking on. “We want to do more ... I am not sure \$200,000 annually works.” He added that updating one spec a year under the current budget is about all we can do – it is a “limp along budget”.

George Hull commented that if using the specs are not mandated or required – what is the sense – may as well put them on a shelf.

Ray responded – “certainly every procurement has used these specifications – they are very cost effective for the states and/or entities to use our specs as the base for their procurement”. Otherwise, they would be on their own and starting from scratch – paying all the costs to develop the spec.

Mike Murray, FRA, noted that “the FRA take is when it comes to requiring the use of the specs, we agree with Ray”. He added that it would not make sense to make everyone go through updating or making changes through the NGEC process in the middle of the design phase in order to be complying.

Mike went on “As relating to funding options, having discussed a grant for funding this – the appetite for the bureaucracy around it offsets the benefit to support the effort.” Mike added “this is the reason why we asked Amtrak to take this on – from an efficiency point of view”. He also noted that “209 is an interesting idea - there is a mechanism for states make 209 payments.” Mike continued, “As far as having FRA managing a discretionary grant, it ends up taking up as much resources as it is to provide the amount of funding the NGEC needs.”

Richard Kedzior, Wisconsin, asked “could we ask the manufacturers to contribute?”

Steve Hewitt provided an overview/background on discussions that were very similar to toady’s in looking at ways to fund the NGEC – through membership fees, incorporation, charging a fee on the use of specifications etc. There was a task force established to determine what the NGEC would be “when it grows up”. In 2014, this task force determined that funding the NGEC was a federal responsibility. The Executive

Board at that time accepted that recommendation and adopted a resolution to that effect. This argument, except for the 209 discussion, has been ongoing for a very long time with no solution forthcoming beyond the conclusion that it should be a federal responsibility.

Larry Salci, NGEC Technical consultant, commented that charging manufacturers a fee could create a conflict. The original concept was for the NGEC to develop specifications that would result in “standardization and interoperability and not rule out any of the manufacturers...The language allowed for competition – plug and play” was the intent. This would result in “more reliable and maintainable standardized specifications.”

#### **October 1<sup>st</sup> – immediate next steps:**

Ray Hessinger moved the discussion to what to do at the end of the month when the funds run out. “We need a plan for October 1<sup>st</sup>”. How do we pay for the activities underway – there are costs to AASHTO and to the few contractors to continue their work while the options for the long-term future is determined. Strat Cavros, AASHTO, noted that he has submitted a 90-day spend plan to Amtrak (Tim Ziethen) and he would need a response from Amtrak authorizing him to engage in contracting with the contractors for 90 days.

Tim Ziethen commented that the intent is to “keep things going while considering other options”, and he added that Amtrak was willing to consider continuing with the current terms – for 90 days or month-to-month. “There is no intent to stop the committee’s work.”

Strat reiterated – “we need authorization”.

George Hull weighed in stating “I agree with that – it can’t be forever...it would need to be date certain – say – by the end of the year.”

Ray Hessinger stated that this makes sense – 3 months out or to the end of the year – give or take 90 days should work. “By that time, we should know if we get a CRISI award.” He added, “we should have a path forward by the end of the month to bring something to SAIPRC – to get them talking about it.”

Ray asked Steve Hewitt if a vote needs to be taken for him to present the general concept to SAIPRC at their quarterly meeting next week.

Steve responded that a vote would not be necessary at this time, because it is a very high-level concept at this point and the NGEC Chair should certainly be able to give SAIPRC a “heads-up” that this concept is being discussed and maybe get a general sense of their reaction to it.

In order to formally move forward beyond the 10,000-foot concept level, the NGEC Executive Board would need to confirm its support. There will need to be a level of support from the NGEC Executive Board that the “209” approach makes sense. For now, making SAIPRC aware is reasonable.

George Hull asked, “are the states willing to contribute, and if so then FRA needs to require Amtrak to continue funding the NGEC”.

Ray agreed to put it before the SAIPRC states during their September quarterly meeting and he reminded NGEC members that not all of the SAIPRC states are members of the NGEC.

Ray asked if the state members are comfortable with him talking to SAIPRC at a high level.

Brian Beeler II responded from his perspective “we need to try something...but no answer by the end of the year is likely”.

Ray added that the NGEC, relatively soon, would need to make a proposal to SAIPRC. He added, “If we see light at the end of the tunnel by 12-31-24, we will need to be very tight on the use of the funding”.

No other state offered a response.

#### **Scheduling Meetings beginning October 1, 2024:**

Steve Hewitt raised the fact that the current meeting schedule ends on 9-30-24. No meetings are scheduled for the Board or the two standing subcommittees. Steve will set up new meetings and send out calendar appointments ending on 12-31-25. However, due to the urgency to resolve funding for the NGEC and to

identify a path forward over the next 3-months, Steve recommended that the Executive Board resume a bi-weekly meeting schedule rather than the current schedule of once every 4 weeks. He also recommended that the Technical subcommittee schedule remain bi-weekly and the FASC remain at the frequency of once every four weeks – all ending on 12-31-24.

Ray Hessinger agreed, and hearing no objections, Steve Hewitt will set up the meetings as noted and schedule through Teams via Outlook.

**Next steps/actions as of 9-17-24:**

- Amtrak (through the CMO George Hull) agreed to fund the NGEC for 90 days beginning on 10-1-24 until 12-31-24.
- Amtrak (Tim Ziethen) will provide AASHTO with an authorization to execute the 90-day spend plan as submitted by AASHTO to Amtrak.
- Following authorization from Amtrak, AASHTO will execute extensions to the sub-contractor agreements for the same period beginning on 10-1-24 through 12-31-24.
- Amtrak (Tim Ziethen) will work up a rough draft of proposed By-Law changes and work with Steve Hewitt to make the modifications that would make sense. A primary area that needs to be addressed is where the mission calls for financing and procuring equipment.
- Amtrak (Tim Ziethen) will work on a more detailed proposal for some (or all) of the costs from 305 (PRIIA Section 305 established the NGEC) to be picked up under the "209" billing process and will endeavor to provide Ray Hessinger with a rough "10,000 ft" level overview of the proposal to give the SAIPRC (209 committee) Board and members a "heads-up", with more detail to follow.
- Ray Hessinger will put the 10,000-foot level concept before the SAIPRC states during their September quarterly meeting.
- The NGEC Executive Board will meet bi-weekly over the 10-1-24 through 12-31-24 period, in order to continue discussions and look at all potential options – most prominently the "209 cost-sharing" proposal and changes to the By-Laws to better define what the NGEC mission is or has become.
- Steve Hewitt will set up the meeting schedules for the next three months for the Executive Board and its standing subcommittees as noted above and schedule them as Teams Meetings via Outlook.
- Amtrak and NGEC members will continue to monitor the CRISI Grant awards which are expected to occur in October or November 2024. If awarded a CRISI grant the NGEC will look to that as the long-term solution option, while continuing to look at short term options due to the time it takes to implement a CRISI grant.

**By-Laws Annual Review:**

The 2023 review resulted in no changes being recommended – and that decision was noted on the By-Laws that were distributed and posted to the website. The By-Laws will next be reviewed by the FASC in the Fall of 2024. In July – the FASC began the review process and set the timelines - with the intent of presenting any potential changes to the Executive Board by November 2024. No change to this process in August – ongoing.

**Note:** As of 9-17-24, this effort is on-hold waiting for Amtrak proposed changes to as noted in the funding discussion. This will be an agenda item for the FASC on 10-10-24.

**NGEC two-pager updates for 2024:**

The 2024 version of the two-page educational flyer remains available electronically or in hard copy by request from Steve Hewitt. It is also posted on the NGEC website [www.ngec.org](http://www.ngec.org).

To date: 488 copies have been distributed.

**Note:** The process for updating the two-pager for 2025 had begun within the FASC. This item is also on hold - awaiting decisions related to future funding of the NGEC.

- Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement:

Locomotives 301 and 302 are at Pueblo for type testing which is progressing well.

Locomotive 302 is in final assembly at the Siemens plant.

- Multi-State Venture Rail Car Procurement as reported by Caltrans on 8-15-24 to the Technical Subcommittee:

All coach type FDR and FAI stages are complete, including Cab Car and Café Car.

The Cab Car FAI and FRA sample car inspections are complete, and the first cars are being prepared for conditional acceptance. The Cab Car 238.111(b) testing is complete, and the test report is in work. The first café cars have been shipped to Chicago and are being prepared for revenue service.

All 137 cars are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. IDOT coaches and Caltrans trainsets are currently in revenue service and additional cars are being added as they are commissioned and accepted.

- Amtrak Equipment Procurement Update as of 9-3-24:

On the new Acela:

Qualification testing continues. All parties are working well together (Amtrak, the OEM and FRA). Multiple meetings are being held each week, some as frequently as daily. The hope is to have them all completed in the next few weeks.

All in all, the project continues to progress and the schedule is in line for arrival in Wilmington for testing next spring. With around 12 months of testing – hope to have revenue service by the following year.

On Airo:

This procurement is progressing well and is on schedule. There are 59 cars in production - 55 coach cars and 4 locomotives. A variety of FAIs are progressing – closing out some.

The intent is to have the first trainset on the corridor in the spring of 2025.

On the ALC 42:

Dan reported that they are progressing well with an average of 1-2 locomotives accepted per month.

Overall, this procurement is in a “steady state”. Qualifying some FMIs and adjusting for PTC.

There is a significant amount of on-corridor testing when the corridor is available. A lot of work on the corridor -and track time is needed for a variety of other reasons which can cause some slow-downs but still progressing well towards completing the initial 75 base order with the 50-option order after.

On the GP38:

Progressing well – 19 in service with several on-site for conditional acceptance in Wilmington and Albany. “Moving along well.”

On the Long-Distance Trainsets:

Continues in the RFP process. It is moving along well with Amtrak working with carbuilders – with questions back and forth. One on ones are taking place as bids are being prepared.

- VIA Rail Equipment Procurements:

A detailed update presentation was provided to the NGEN during the Annual Meeting on 2-2-24.

The presentation is posted in the Meetings section of the website at [www.ngec.org](http://www.ngec.org)

- Document Control Update:

The Mechanical WG met on Aug 13 to review the DCRs proposed for the single-level specification. They have not made a decision as of yet on those DCRs but they have agreed to meet every two weeks to review and decide on the DCRs. I do not have an approval from the Aug 27 meeting but hopefully they will come to decision in their Sept 10 meeting. Also, during this review, the working group realized the door section in the single-level spec is not as detailed as the bi-level spec. It was decided that a smaller task force would review the two specs and update the door section in the single level spec. Door experts are encouraged to volunteer for the task force.

The Communications Working Group is continuing their work on the DTL specs to be included in the various equipment specifications. They have completed a version of the DTL spec for inclusion in the trainset spec but holding off on submission until they see the final version for the single level spec as they are very similar. They are currently working on a version of the DTL specification for inclusion in the bi-level specification. This was just recently started and won't be complete for at least a few months.

The Materials WG has had a slow summer with little activity. However, the draft of the structural section for aluminum is nearly complete and the materials section will be mostly derivative from the requirements in the structural section so a draft will be easily assembled. The plan is to start meetings back up in September with a goal to finish the single car spec drafts by the end of November.

Tammy has continued to meet weekly with the Technical Writer to work on the de-Amtrak the PRIIA specs.

- Filling Vacancies:

Vacancies exist on the Specification Review Panels

Current status as of 8-31-24:

As of 9-30 -24, the only remaining vacancies are all slated for Caltrans. Steve Hewitt has had several email conversations with Kyle Gradinger, Caltrans, regarding the vacancies. Caltrans wishes to remain on the Panels but has yet to determine who will serve.

**Note:** Caltrans has now appointed Ryan Sharpe to the Single Level Rai Car Spec Review Panel.

Consultants/ Technical Support to the Review Panels:

Review Panel Consultant – Larry Salci

NGEC Support – Steve Hewitt

Technical Support – Tammy Krause

Amtrak Technical Support – Mike Kraft

Bi-Level Car Review Panel:

Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT – Chair

Vacant Caltrans

Amanda Martin, Iowa DOT

Melissa Shurland, FRA

Locomotive Review Panel:

Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT – Chair

Vacant Caltrans

Melina Lopez, IDOT

Jason Biggs, Washington State DOT  
Melissa Shurland, FRA

Trainset Review Panel:  
Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT – Chair  
Maria Hobbs, Iowa DOT  
Jason Biggs, Washington State DOT  
**Vacant Caltrans**  
Melissa Shurland, FRA

Single Level Rail Car Review Panel:  
Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT -- Chair  
Maria Hobbs, Iowa DOT  
Jason Biggs, WSDOT  
Ryan Sharpe, Caltrans  
Melissa Shurland, FRA

DMU Review Panel Members:  
Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT -- Chair  
Melissa Shurland, FRA  
Brian Beeler, for Maine DOT  
**Vacant - Caltrans**

- 2025 NGEN Annual Meeting:

The 2025 Annual Meeting will be held in the afternoon on 1-30-25 at a new location: **Crystal City, VA at the [Renaissance Arlington Capital View](#)**. It will, once again, be held in conjunction with other rail meetings taking place throughout the week.

**Note:** Due to the unresolved funding issues – planning for the Annual Meeting is on hold. The deadline for letting AASHTO know what the NGEN plans to do is 11-15-24.

**FRA Presentation to NGEN Technical subcommittee 9-26-24:**

The September FRA R&D presentation will be Sep 26, 2024. Steve Hewitt encouraged members of the Executive Board who are not on the Technical subcommittee to join the meeting on 9-26-24 if they can.

**Topic: The Locomotive Crashworthiness Research Program**

*Presenter: Patricia Llana, Mechanical Engineer, Structures & Dynamics Division*

*The presentation will feature an overview of the Train Occupant Protection Research Program on crashworthiness. A series of tests were completed that successfully developed and verified a crash energy management system (CEM) that can be retrofit onto existing locomotives. Through extensive computer simulations validated by multiple full-scale dynamic impact tests, the program has demonstrated that employing CEM on locomotives greatly reduces the propensity for derailment and override, while absorbing collision energy in a controlled, predictable manner.*

**See Technical subcommittee section of this report for an overview of the 9-26-24 presentation.**

**Technical subcommittee**

**Chair: Don Ruppert, Amtrak**  
**Vice Chair: Joe Paul, Amtrak**

During the month of September 2024, the subcommittee met twice – on the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 26<sup>th</sup>:

Key decisions and action item updates from the month of August 2024, included:

- Backgrounder educational document:

The 2024 NGEC two-page educational was released on 2-2-24 at the NGEC Annual Meeting. As of 8-31-24, 488 copies have been distributed. The document is available in electronic or hard copy versions. Requests should be sent to Steve Hewitt at [shewitt109@aol.com](mailto:shewitt109@aol.com)

- Document Control Update – as of 9-12-24

The Mechanical Working Group (WG) met on September 10 and will meet again on the 24<sup>th</sup>. They have not decided yet on those DCRs but hope to finish working through them next month. The working group is also forming a smaller task force for working on the door section in the single-level spec. Door experts are encouraged to volunteer for the task force.

Communications WG is continuing to work on the DTL specs to be included in the various equipment specifications. They are currently working on a version of the DTL specification for inclusion in the bi-level specification. This was just recently started and won't be complete for at least a few months.

The Materials WG will be restarting their meetings this month. The draft of the structural section for aluminum is nearly complete and the materials section will be mostly derivative from the requirements in the structural section so a draft will be easily assembled with a goal to finish the single car spec drafts by the end of November.

Tammy Krause has continued to meet weekly with the Technical Writer to work on the de-Amtrakking the PRIIA specs.

- Multi-State Car Procurement - Caltrans (Lead State) update as of 9-26-24

All coach type FDR and FAI stages are complete, including Cab Car and Café Car.

The Cab Car FAI and FRA sample car inspections are complete, and the first cab cars are being prepared for Amtrak acceptance and revenue service. The Cab Car 238.111(b) testing is complete, and the test report is in final review. The first café cars have been shipped to Chicago and are entering revenue service.

All 137 cars are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. IDOT coaches and Caltrans trainsets are being added to revenue service as they are commissioned and accepted.

- Metro North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement as of 8-31-24:

See the Executive Board section of this report for the status of this procurement.

- Amtrak Equipment Procurement Updates as of 8-15-24:

On the new Acela:

Qualification testing continues. All parties are working well together (Amtrak, the OEM and FRA). There have been no significant issues during testing -the trainset is performing well. Within the next month or so the final report should be submitted to FRA.

All in all, the project continues to progress well.

On Airo:

This procurement is progressing well and is on schedule. There are 63 cars in production - 59 coach cars and 4 locomotives. A variety of FAIs are wrapping up. They are working with the car builder on several subcomponents such as HVAC, seating etc.

The intent is to have the first trainset on the corridor for testing in the spring of 2025.

On the ALC 42:

Dan reported that they are progressing in a steady state. There are 58 locomotives in service 4 are in for commissioning. FMI testing is taking place "as we speak" mitigating a few issues.

On the Long-Distance Trainsets:

Continues as an active RFP. It is moving along well with Amtrak working with carbuilders – with questions going back and forth.

- Connecticut DOT Rail Car Procurement as of 8-15-24:

CtDOT is still working through finalizing PDR, and have had an FAI of the engineer's seat.

- Presentation: Locomotive Crashworthiness Research Program - Presenter: Patricia Llana, Mechanical Engineer, Structures & Dynamics Division

Patricia Llana gave an excellent and comprehensive overview of FRA's Crashworthiness Research.

The presentation can be found on the NGEN website and was distributed prior to today's meeting by Steve Hewitt to all NGEN Technical Subcommittee members and industry participants.

This was the third presentation in the series to be given on a monthly basis by FRA.

- NGEN future funding – CRISI Grant Application:

See the Executive Board section of this report for the status of this procurement.

- 2025 NGEN Annual Meeting:

The 2025 Annual Meeting will be held in the afternoon on 1-30-25 at a new location: Crystal City, VA at the [Renaissance Arlington Capital View](#). It will, once again, be held in conjunction with other rail meetings taking place throughout the week.

### **The Finance and Administrative Subcommittee**

**Chair: Tim Ziethen, Amtrak**

**Vice Chair: Brian Beeler II, NNEPRA for Maine DOT**

**Second Vice Chair: Amanda Martin, Iowa DOT**

**The Finance and Administrative subcommittee (FASC) will hold a conference call every four weeks on Wednesdays at 3:00pm Eastern.**

During the Month of September 2024, the Finance and Administrative Subcommittee did not meet:

Status of ongoing items:

- Balance/Spend Rate Through June 2024

Total Invoiced/Incurred (Including Carryover) - \$154,892.18

Forecast/Accrual Amount to Reflect Billing Lag 60 days - \$30,000.

Invoiced + Accrual Expenses to date (through March) – \$184,892.18

Amtrak AOP Funding - \$260,000

Remaining funds (total available less Invoiced + Accrual) - \$75,107.82

Estimated full year (YTD Incl. Carry Over + FC + Remaining Months @ Avg Spend TD) – 201,265.68.

Current Average Monthly Spend – just under \$16,373.50.

With this type of funding, a balance does not carry-over from one fiscal year to another.

- Status - CRISI Grant Application:

The CRISI Grant Application for funding the NGEC was submitted on time to the portal. It included many letters of support. It is not too late to send in support letters. They should be sent to Tim Ziethen and Meghan Histan, Amtrak Grants.

- Next steps if funded/not funded:

See Executive Board Section of this report for current status.

- By-Laws Annual Review:

See Executive Board Section of this report for current status.

- NGEC two-pager updates for 2025:

See Executive Board Section of this report for current status.

**NGEC Specification Review Panel(s):**

**For each PRIIA NGEC specification a Review Panel has been established to compare the specification (as developed by the technical subcommittee) against a Requirements document previously adopted by the Executive Board. As the Review Panel completes its work, it prepares a report with recommendations. This report is submitted to the Executive Board for its consideration. Once accepted by the Board, the specification is subsequently formally adopted by the Executive Board. As part of the Document Control process, any proposed revisions to a PRIIA NGEC specification must go through the Review Panel process as well. At such times, the Review Panel, previously established for a specification, is re-convened by the Executive Board chair.**

The NGEC Review Panels did not meet in September 2024. Several vacancies are yet to be filled by Caltrans as noted previously in this report.